



Extension Education in Willacy County

Making a Difference

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and its partners have long been dedicated to educating Texans. Extension education evolved nationwide under the 1914 federal Smith-Lever Act, which sought to extend university knowledge and agricultural research findings directly to the people. Ever since, Extension programs have addressed the emerging issues of the day, reaching diverse rural and urban populations.

In Texas, all 254 counties are served by a well-organized network of professional Extension educators and some 100,000 trained volunteers. Extension expertise and educational outreach pertain to the food and fiber industry, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, nutrition and health, and community economic development. Among

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Providing Solutions*

those served are hundreds of thousands of young people who benefit annually from Extension's 4-H and youth development programs.

Texans turn to Extension education for solutions. Extension agents and specialists respond not only with answers, but also with resources and services that result in significant returns on the public's investment. Extension programs are custom-designed for each region of the state, with residents providing input and help with program delivery. Here are just a few highlights of Extension impacts on this county and its people.

Willacy County – Summary of 2013 Educational Contacts

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Outcome Programs for Willacy County

2013 Willacy/Cameron/Hidalgo County Crop Production Program

Relevance

Nutrient management is an important economic and environmental issue that affects water quality, soil quality and crop productivity. Sugarcane, cotton, grain sorghum and corn are important agronomic crops for the Rio Grande Valley. An estimated 70 percent of sugarcane producers could improve their yields which could enhance the profitability of this crop for all producers. New/underutilized crops need to continue to be investigated such as soybeans and sesame.

Response

In addressing the need for the educational programs, the Agents from the three county area implemented educational programs addressing the following topics:

- Introduction to different irrigation techniques
- Introduction to different pest control techniques
- Conduct Variety trial on Cotton and Grain Sorghum – this was done to identify performance differences in the varieties in the trials.
- Soil test Campaign – This would measure the fertility needs in fields and give a recommended fertilizer application for that field.

Results

- A total of 10 group methods resulted in 2050 contact hours of education. The economic impact of the RGV Nutrient Management Education Program was measured in terms of potential fertilizer savings that have resulted from increased adoption of soil testing. Using soil test recommendations and producer-planned fertilizer rates, the potential savings in nitrogen and phosphate are estimated to be 5.1 and 6.1 million pounds, respectively. Reduction in fertilizer application rates translates into an average cost savings of \$25.77 per acre, depending on crop and management history. Total potential economic benefit to producers since the program began in 2001 are estimated at \$5.3 million. This analysis does not include the value of environmental benefits.
- Ag producers were educated on a wide variety of topics using a number of different methods. Topics included cotton, soybean, grain sorghum, corn, sesame, sunflower and guar production; conservation tillage; risk management; fertility management; marketing and many others. Methods included field days, educational meetings and publications. These included: Cotton Pre-Plant Conference, Grain Sorghum, Corn and Sunflower Field Day, Cotton and Sesame Field Day, Sugarcane Field Day and a Fall Corn Field Day. Research demonstrations conducted on producer farms are used to collect an unbiased source of performance data that is used by growers to help determine the most profitable varieties to select for this area. New efforts to increase producer profits included conducting an irrigated guar hybrid result demonstration. Interpretation efforts.

Future Plans

Agent will continue to work with neighboring County Agents in offering programs for producers to increase knowledge in techniques/practices that can increase profit in crop production.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Output Programs for Willacy County

2013 Rio Grande Valley Beef Development Program

Relevance

Beef producers can improve their herd or the herds of their customers through more rigid sire selection. Replacement heifers will perform to higher levels when in optimum body condition. Beef producers want to increase the value of bulls by collecting feedlot performance data and carcass characteristics.

Response

Texas A&M Agrilife Extension conducted an official 112 day bull gain test and a 126 day heifer development program. Numerous data are collected on all animals including: initial and final weights, average daily gain, body condition score, scrotal circumference, sheath score, reproductive tract score, pelvic area measurements, hip height and ultra-sound measurement of backfat thickness and ribeye area. All data is provided to consignors.

Results

A total of 4 group methods resulted in a total of 99 contact hours of education. A bull gain test and heifer development program has been conducted each year from 1998 through 2013. Participants indicate a positive economic benefit to their beef cattle operations as a result of their participation. A total of 1133 bulls, 964 heifers and 142 steers have been entered in the 16 years the program has been conducted. Currently, 33 bulls and 65 heifers are entered in the program by cattlemen participating from throughout south and central Texas.

Future Plans

In cooperation with the Rio Grande Valley Beef Improvement Association, plans are to continue the program and perhaps consider marketing alternatives for participants. Another future possibility will be to offer an artificial insemination program for heifers.

2013 Willacy County General ANR Contacts

Willacy County Agriculture plan provided a number of programs for the producers of Willacy County. Programs consisted of the following:

- Site Visits
- Individual Consultations
- Offering CEU's at events/programs

2013 Willacy County General ANR Plan

This plan was conducted to assist landowners and home owners in the county with horticulture questions.

Relevance

Due to our geographical location, and distance from nurseries and landscaping maintenance companies, numerous questions are fielded by the County Extension Agent for the Clientele of Willacy County.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Response

The Agent assisted landowners and home owners by answering questions via telephone, office visits, and making numerous site visits in order to assist clientele with questions on trees, shrubs, lawns, and insects. Agent was able to assist individuals with numerous problems, many of which were caused by drought. Agent conducted Private applicator training, in order to assist both homeowners and producers with the need for gaining a private applicator license to assist them in purchasing the needed herbicides to maintain their desired botanicals. Agent offers opportunities for individual to attend CEU trainings Two Time a year to assist licensed individuals with their needed credits.

Future Plans

Agent will continue to offer private applicator trainings, along with CEU opportunities in the County. Site visits and phone calls will be answered in order to assist clientele with problems as they arise.

2013 Willacy County Community & Economic Development-Agribusiness

Relevance

The primary purpose of this plan is to identify and to enhance the delivery of technical support and assistance by educational efforts to socially disadvantage and limited resource agriculture producers. This plan will address and focus in a wide range of activities i.e. agribusinesses by assisting producers in the identification of efficient agribusiness practices, proper business management trainings, and accounting/bookkeeping workshops.

Response

Identified producers that will benefit from our services to develop and offer educational programs that will address their specific production concerns. Small farmers, ranchers, and agri-business owners implemented efficient and effective accounting business practices that can decrease their business expenses and increase production and profitability. The Willacy County program area committee identified ways to increase community awareness of programs by way of mass marketing, social networking, and information delivery on small business and community and economic development opportunities

Result

The following educational activities were organized by the Willacy County program area committee to achieve the objective.

1. We organized a task force to discuss educational programming efforts and individuals that will be involved in the panning of the program.
2. We identified USDA programs to add value to their farming and ranching operations and kept updated information such as newsletters and fact sheets from government programs to market the program.
3. Agent worked on meeting with potential agribusiness to discuss loan opportunities. Several producers from Willacy County were assisted in applying for USDA Micro Loans, Direct Loans, and Guaranteed Loans. This process was delivered through one-on-one visits and through news articles.
4. Several educational programs/workshops were offered throughout the year on record book training, financial management, marketing of products using data collection, nontraditional business production workshop and youth loan opportunities for starting their own business.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

5. These educational programs were organized with the input of key leaders of the community and other Extension Personnel who assisted in the planning and organization of these educational programs.
6. Agent evaluated customer satisfaction data that was collected from participants during programming, and other stakeholders which will be used to evaluate program and make modifications.
7. Developed interpretation market piece that was provided with Leadership Advisory Board Members, County Commissioners, and other stake holders who assisted in planning efforts.

Collaborators

The following businesses assisted with resources to make this programming possible.

- Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- Texas Agriculture Finance
- Local Agriculture Lenders
- Willacy County Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Local Banks

Future Plans

With the guidance and support of the program area committee we have been able to provide excellent programming to meet the need of the clientele. These programs reflect on the areas that will help build more businesses in Willacy County. We will continue to provide the necessary educational programs and activities that limited resource families need to sustain best financial and management practices for their business operations. We will continue to work on the promotion of available loan opportunities through the United States Department of Agriculture by assisting clients in application process.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Willacy County Friend to Friend Event

The *Friend to Friend* program's purpose is to encourage women to get regular mammograms and Pap tests for the early detection of breast and cervical cancer, when the disease is most curable.

Relevance

- Regular screening significantly increases the likelihood of finding cancer early, when treatment is more often successful.
- Women living in rural areas of Texas are less likely than their urban counterparts to have had a mammogram or Pap test within the past two years.
- Mortality is higher for rural women because of later diagnosis

Response

- This project's goal is to decrease breast and cervical cancer morbidity and mortality for women living in rural Texas counties by improving screening rates and early detection of cancer.
- Funding was applied for and awarded by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) to fund screenings and transportation to uninsured and underserved women in need of screening services.
- The county Extension agent, regional cancer prevention specialist, and patient navigators plan and implement a *Friend to Friend* event. Women attending are given the opportunity to sign a commitment card to obtain a mammogram and/or Pap test within the next year and the option to complete a help request form for assistance in obtaining screening services.

Results

- *Friend to Friend* was implemented in 42 Texas counties in 2013.
- 69 women attended the *Friend to Friend* events on September 25, 2013 at the Lyford CISD Staff Development Building in the city of Lyford, Texas.
- 10 total volunteers assisted at party/events.
- Other Healthcare Provider and a Breast Cancer survivor urged women to obtain a mammogram/Pap screening at the events.
- At the end of the event 90.7% of women, aged 40 or over, correctly identified the need for a mammogram screening every year.
- 66 Women requested help to navigate screening and diagnostic services.
- Two Clinical sites for screenings, diagnostics, radiologists and lab services were contracted including the following:
 - Harlingen OB/GYN (Cameron)
 - Valley Baptist Medical Center – Breast Center
- As of October, 2013, \$130.27 has been paid for Mammogram screenings, Pap Screenings, and diagnostics through CPRIT funds.
- Over 40 Pap screenings and have been scheduled after the PINK Event on 09/25/13.
- Around 38 Mammogram screenings have been scheduled after the PINK Event on 09/25/13.

Family and Consumer Sciences

- 3 Women were referred to other available sources for Breast and Cervical screenings and diagnostics.

Future Plans

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Willacy County will attempt to organize another Friend to Friend event for the residence of Willacy County.

4-H and Youth Development

Outcome Programs for Willacy County

2013 Willacy County “Keys to the Courthouse”

Relevance

The “Keys to the Courthouse: A Curriculum Enrichment Program for Youth,” is a 124 page leadership-oriented publication on county government produced through a partnership between the Texas Association of Counties, the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas and the VG Young Institute. The program features five lessons with associated age-appropriate (7th and 12th grade) classroom and research activities. Each lesson includes information compatible with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Included in the curriculum is a DVD which includes videos on the roles of primary offices in the courthouse as well as a poster of the Texas counties for displaying in the classroom. The specific objectives of the Keys to the Courthouse are:

- Identify the functions of county government.
- Understand mandates set forth by state and federal government that county government must adhere to.
- Understand the auxiliary services provided by county governments.
- Understand how to access county services provided.
- Identify the limits of county law enforcement.
- Understanding the participant’s part in keeping their county safe.
- Understand the importance of the election process.
- Explore the process of becoming a candidate for county office.
- Identify the sources of income for county government.

Response

The goal of implementing “Keys to the Courthouse: A Curriculum Enrichment Program for Youth” is to give youth an opportunity to learn more about their county government and the services it provides to the citizens. The knowledge gained through this curriculum experience will empower today’s youth to better use county government services when they are adults.

Results

We measured the level of understanding with seven statements. The participants measured their own level of understanding before and after program by marking between a 1 through 4 scale, with 1 being no understanding and 4 being a high level of understanding.

- All participants indicated on the retrospective post that the knowledge they had on the subject had increased from before participating in the Keys to the Courthouse curriculum.
- All of the measurables for the knowledge gained saw an increase on the scale.

We also measured behavior change from the program with 4 statements. The participant would respond to each statement with a yes/no/unsure.

- 8 of the 9 participants indicated that they have a better appreciation for helping keep Willacy County safe.
- 8 of the 9 participants indicated that they have or plan to be a stronger advocate on issues affecting Willacy County and its citizens.
- 5 of the participants indicated that they have or plan to be a stronger influence to others in educating them on the roles of county government.

4-H and Youth Development

Future Plans

Agent will continue to work with the Willacy County 4-H Council to educate them on the importance of county government in their daily lives and how issues may affect them.

2013 Willacy County Youth Coastal Sport Fishing Camp

Relevance

According to the Southwick report Fishing is a multibillion dollar industry in Texas. The total Texas economic impact from sport fishing \$4.73 billion in 2006, of which \$1.79 billion comes directly from salt water fishing. The Southwick report also stated that since outdoor recreation dollars are often spent in rural or lightly populated areas, the economic contributions of fish and wildlife resources can be especially important to rural and outlying suburban-exurban economies. Texas has become a top fishing destination for tourists both because of the excellent freshwater reservoirs and streams filled with largemouth bass, smallmouth bass and catfish and because of the superb red drum and spotted sea trout fishery along the coast. As the Texas Population grows, the interest in fishing has grown as well. In 2006 there were 1.1 million saltwater anglers in Texas (both resident and nonresident), fishing a total of 15.1 million days. Out of the total number of saltwater anglers 1.07 million anglers were Texas residents. While the Texas Coastal fisheries are known for the variety of species that can be found, most fishing efforts were directed at redfish.

Response

As Fishing continues to gain popularity throughout the state, Texas coastal waters are seeing more youth anglers enjoying a day of fishing with family members and friends. The Willacy County Youth Coastal Sport Fishing Camp Outcome Plan is intended to teach these youth anglers:

- Laws and Regulations of fishing on Texas Saltwater inshore fisheries
- Tackle & Equipment
- Fishing Knots
- Texas Saltwater Inshore Bait Fish
- Texas Saltwater Inshore Game Fish Identification
- Using Natural (Live/dead) Bait
- Using Artificial Lures
- Seafood Recipes

The intent of this plan is to teach the attendees the importance of conservation and become good stewards of natural resources.

Results

In comparing the pre- versus the post- test all of the 21 students who took both pre- and post-tests showed an increase in their test scores. The average number of correctly answered questions on the pre-test was 18.48 out of 40 which resulted in a 46% average for the group. The average number of correctly answered questions on the post-test was 30.87 which resulted in a 71% average for the group. As a result, the average participant increased their post- versus pre- tests scores by 12.39 questions which is a 40 % increase in correctly answered questions. When comparing pre- versus post-test only 2 students scored above a 70% on the pre-test and 17 students scored above 70% on the post-test.

Future Plans

Agent will continue work with the Willacy County 4-H members on teaching them the importance of conservation and how to be good stewards of natural resources.

4-H and Youth Development

2013 Willacy County Youth Entrepreneurship Program

Relevance

Entrepreneurism is becoming a viable career for many youth and adults for several reasons. Corporations are still downsizing and there is a shift in the market and labor force from production to goods and services. The number of opportunities for minorities to climb the corporate management structure is limited. According to the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey data, unemployment rates for youth are much higher than rates for other age groups. 14% of youth aged 15-19 are currently unemployed. Low-income youth and Hispanic youth also tend to have much higher unemployment rates. To be a successful entrepreneur, though, it is critical that today's youth see the link between success in school and success in the workplace. Middle school youngsters are eager to earn money, yet opportunities due to their age may be scarce.

Response

Youth from the La Sara Future Farmers of America Entrepreneur program were provided an incentive to become involved in a positive activity while increasing their abilities in academic areas and necessary future workplace skills. The Youth Entrepreneur program provided a natural incentive for youth to become involved in a positive activity while increasing their abilities in workplace skills and competencies. These improved competencies increase the chance of being competitive in the future labor market and stress the importance of staying in school.

Program Goals

Students perceived the Youth Entrepreneur program as a fun opportunity to learn how to earn money successfully. The goal of this program was to help youth:

- Develop personal skills and workplace competencies
- Explore the career of entrepreneurship
- Develop a positive business ethic
- Research business ideas
- Decide on a business
- Develop a business plan with a detailed and complete budget
- Orally presented their business plan
- Provide ongoing management of business-planning, selling, scheduling, promotion, money management, inventory control, and record keeping

Results

Evaluation of the Willacy County Youth Entrepreneur program had a high impact, low cost, and easy to implement program. A total of 19 youth participated in the program. 17 of the 19 participants (98%) showed they have the necessary skills needed to become an entrepreneur. The others (2%) showed that they have a good chance to become entrepreneurs. Through a pre & post test program survey, youth thought being in the Youth Entrepreneur Program;

- Taught them the importance of cooperation and teamwork (89%)
- Taught them how to develop and run a business (92%)
- Encouraged them to attend school (98%)
- Gave them self confidence (94%)

4-H and Youth Development

Other measure that were collected indicated that students;

- Improved skills in teamwork, problem solving, money management, decision making, personal responsibility and public speaking
- Increased their ability to explore many possibilities of future job opportunities.
- Are more interested in school
- Seemed more confident and are more willing to try new things
- Are more often talking about the program at home with parents

Collaborators

This program was a collaborative effort between the La Sara Independent School District, local businesses, and youth serving organizations that provided an opportunity for young people to learn important life skills and attitudes as they work together to develop youth run businesses.

Summary

Youth perceive this program as fun and as an opportunity to learn how to earn money. The Youth Entrepreneur Program enhanced emotional, mental and social development; developed leadership skills; the work ethic; public speaking skills; civic responsibility; introduced youth to a variety of career options; and developed business and organizational related skills that will prepare them for their future. Interpretation was shared with key stake holders and continuing entrepreneurship program will continue in the county.

4-H and Youth Development

Output Programs for Willacy County

2013 Willacy County Youth ANR and Livestock

4-H ANR projects are critically important to the youth of Texas. Livestock projects, Science of Ag Programs, soil, grass, and entomology judging and ID are all important programs.

Relevance

In 2000 there were over 75,000 county livestock show entries for cattle, swine, meat goats and sheep (Coufal, 2006) one half of those entries were 4-H. There have been six major benefits identified as a result of exhibiting livestock: 1. social relations; 2) character; 3) family; 4) competition; 5) learning new cultures and environments; and 6) helping finance the youth's higher education. Parents of youth suggest that life skills are enhanced by raising a 4-H livestock project. The longer youth are engaged in the project they are more likely to develop life skills (Boleman, 2003).

Response

In support of the Youth ANR Livestock Plan the Willacy County AgriLife Extension office along with volunteers planed clinics, conducted project visits and advised 4-H Families at stock shows. The CEA also served as Willacy County State Steer Validation Chairman and as a committee member on Willacy County State Swine/Sheep/Goat Validation Committees. The CEA also served as an advisor/4-H liaison to the Willacy County Fair Board of directors. CEA also offered trainings on how to conduct Method demonstrations that were being prepared for County and District 4-H Roundup.

Some of the major activities under this plan are as follow:

- Rio Grande Valley Showmanship Academy
 - Agents from Willacy, Cameron and Hidalgo County organized a multi Species multi county showmanship academy. All attendees went through Quality Counts training. After the Quality Counts training attendees were able to break up into one of 5 species groups to learn about feeding and caring for their livestock projects. After learning about feeding and caring the presenters showed attendees showmanship techniques and what is looking for in showmanship. After a quick lunch break attendees were able to go back to their species groups and learn how to clip each species in preparation for livestock shows.
- Beef Showmanship Clinic
 - Volunteers organized a Beef cattle Showmanship clinic and field day. Attendees learned how to clip cattle, feeding strategies and showing techniques. Attendees were then able to show off their showmanship abilities in age group showmanship classes. Winners were awarded champion buckles.
- Quality Assurance Clinic
 - In support of the Willacy County fair emphasis on quality assurance, a quality assurance clinic was held. CEA covered Feeds and feed additives, Medications and wormers, withdraw period, injection sites and techniques. Attendees were able to practice injection techniques with bananas.

Future Plans

Willacy County AgriLife Extension will continue to support 4-H youth involvement in Agriculture/Natural Resources and Livestock projects. We will continue to offer clinics/trainings and keeping them informed on rules, issues and contests.

4-H and Youth Development

2013 Willacy County 4-H Program Administration

Relevance

The management of the 4-H Program in tells much consideration to details, organizing volunteers, and delegating job responsibilities to individuals that can follow through with the given tasks.

Response

This year's management of the 4-H program consisted of numerous activities that included: Monthly newsletters, news articles, news releases, marketing events, checking youth's eligibility, livestock show committee meetings, project group meetings, fundraising, and most importantly interpreting events to key stake holders. Willacy County AgriLIFE Extension meets with Willacy County 4-H Council regularly in order to gather input on upcoming events such as awards night, club meeting, county events, fundraising opportunities. Willacy County Council meets in order to plan events such as the awards night.

Some of the major activities under this plan are as follow

- Photography
 - In support of the Willacy County Photography Project, a Photography workshop was held. Topics covered consisted of; parts of a camera, what makes a good picture and mounting/framing photo of competition. This project appears to be gaining popularity amongst 4-H members.
- Method Demonstration
 - In support of 4-H members who would be conducting Method Demonstration at County and District Roundup, CEA conducted a 2 group training teaching 4-H members and parents what a method demonstration is, what goes in it, and how to present info. CEA followed up the 2 group trainings with one on one work with three teams. Willacy County 4-H had two teams advance to District Roundup where the two Int. team both won their division and ended up winning 1st and 2nd in the sweepstakes competition which is given to the best presentation for the age group. The one senior team that competed at District was awarded 1st place in their division and took home 2nd place honors in the sweepstakes competition. At State 4-H Roundup the senior team competed in the largest method demonstration group against 27 other teams. After a long day the Willacy County 4-H Senior method demonstration team was awarded 2nd place.
- Record Books
 - Conducted one group training at which CEA taught 4-H members parts of a record book, how to form the story, and how to organize the record book. Provided more one on one training, for 4-H members who are interested in organizing a record book for submission for county and district competition. This year Willacy County had 7 Record Books advance to District competition.
- Livestock Judging
 - In support of the Willacy County 4-H members who wanted to participate in livestock judging we held numerous workouts on live animals whenever/wherever we could get together. At these workouts we would practice judging classes and then have the 4-H members give their reasons for placing them the way that they did. This year we took one Intermediate team and one senior team to District competition. The Intermediate team was awarded 1st place at District and had two team members place in the top five individually. The senior team also had a good day at district as they were awarded 2nd place and advance to State roudup as one of the teams

4-H and Youth Development

representing District 12. At State roundup the senior team placed 14th out of the 29 teams that competed in the contest.

Results

The Willacy County 4-H Council members have taken on more leadership roles in their clubs, and are conducting more effective club meetings due to the trainings and encouragement they have received from volunteers and extension staff.

Leadership opportunities were marketed through the Willacy County 4-H Newsletter, giving youth the opportunity to take part in such programs. As a result 7 youth 4-H members attended District 12 4-H Leadership Lab, and 2 more youth served as voting delegates at District 12 4-H Election Convention.

Future Plans

Willacy County AgriLIFE Extension would like to continue to strengthen the Willacy County 4-H Council and give them the tools to make them a productive group that thrives to make the best better. The Willacy County Extension office will continue marketing and interpreting highlight of programs in the county. Volunteer involvement will continue to grow, as our ever-changing responses to emerging issues emerge.

Community Economic Development

Outcome Programs for Willacy County

2013 Willacy County Community & Economic Development

Relevance

Community development programming targets the development of individual abilities and community support for creating and growing businesses, jobs, wealth, income, job preparedness, career development, understanding community capacity and resources, community infrastructure, etc. Through these efforts and support of stakeholders, communities will improve the well-being of its citizens.

Response

Through the support of volunteers and members of the program area committee, the Cooperative Extension Program has worked on identifying issues provide educational programs in community and economic development to enhance the quality of life for the residents in Willacy County. I have provided workshops to teach individuals and businesses the knowledge and skills needed for building sustainable communities and develop new community leaders that can effectively lead organizations to increase economic growth. These skills will aid by increasing their business production, increase standards of living, increase disposable income, and increase jobs within the community.

The following educational activities were organized by the effort of volunteers and members of the Willacy County program area committee to achieve the objective.

1. I worked with livestock producer Dario Perez to discuss a potential **Business Opportunity** in developing a hog operation in Willacy County or in South Texas. We discussed financing opportunities, location, economics, and laws and regulations towards this project. After weeks of researching program goals, he decided to first concentrate on financial options to assistance in this project.
2. A **Recordkeeping & USDA Loan Workshop** took place at The Raymondville Chamber of Commerce Rural Technology Center. In attendance we had 13 attendees present at the program. Information consisted of educational material on financial statements, identifying source of receipts, keeping track of deductible expense, preparing their tax returns, and supporting items reported on tax returns. An Income & Expenses Record Hand Book was provided. This workshop helped participants monitor the progress of their business more cautiously.
3. I presented information on USDA Micro Loans at a **Business Planning Workshop** to a group of 18 participants. This was in collaboration with Texas Agrilife Extension Agents from Hidalgo County, District Economic Specialist, and faculty from the Sam Houston State University Agribusiness. June 20, 2013
4. Producers are looking at ways to utilize small acres of land and providing a financial opportunity for their production. As a result, I collaborate with Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service and Prairie View A&M University Goat Research International on hosting a two day **Goat Workshop** on teaching both adults and youth about goat production on small acre farms. Participants learned how to run a successful operation on small acreage and how to finding financial support. 90 small land owners were in attendance. As a result, program survey indicated for future programming in goat production. July 12-13
5. I am the committee leader of Health People of Willacy County Subcommittee **Community Garden**. I have provided planning meetings to strengthen the project and worked on volunteers. I have market the

Community Economic Development

program throughout the community and composed a contract for members. We drew out plots and gave them a dimension. Water lines need to be put in before we start planting in the spring.

6. I participated in a **Community Economic Summit** sponsored by the City of Raymondville to plan building of short, mid and long term priorities for the community. The program brought together city, state, local elected officials along with government agencies to learn of city needs. As a result, I serve on the leadership focus group committee and agriculture committee which meets monthly to discuss future programming needs.
7. I hosted a **Home Owners Program** that provided assistance with home owner through the 504 assistance program with Rural Development by doing home repair. I'm working with Raymondville resident by having her work on a personal information form to fill out for FEMA assistance due to her home being damaged by Hurricane Dolly.
8. I collaborated with Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service in the planning and organizing a health program called Friend To Friend which was a **Women's Cancer Awareness Program** in Lyford, Tx. I assisted by working with Valley Metro System by transporting several participants to program. This system works out of the Lower Rio Grande Development Council. Over 80 women participants were in attendance at this three hour event. Speakers talked about self screening and services. A local surviving cancer participant spoke about her cancer experience.
9. Nov. 9, I hosted a **Rio Grande Valley Livestock Academy Workshop** in collaboration with County Extension Agents from Cameron and Hidalgo Counties. I brought information to parents and youth on Youth Loan Opportunities to start their own business.

Collaborators

The following businesses assisted with resources to make this program possible:

- Raymondville Chamber of Commerce
- Raymondville Economic Development Council
- Healthy People of Willacy County
- Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service
- Local Businesses
- Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show
- USDA Rural Development

Future Plans

Through the support and guidance of agencies involved we were able to provide the necessary educational program needed for participants to be able to apply these skills and resources into their businesses or home owners financing situations to better their lives. These programs will continue to be offered with the support of the program area committee.

Community Economic Development

Output Programs for Willacy County

Resource Development

Willacy County Junior Livestock Show:

The 2013 Willacy County Junior Livestock Show generated over \$187,000 for the youth of Willacy County. Youth had the opportunity to sell show projects at the conclusion of the show. Funds were generated from donors in and around Willacy County.

Willacy County Beef Syndicate Dinner:

Willacy County 4-H has traditionally held a brisket plate sale Two Weeks prior to the Willacy County Fair. This year there were over 2400 plates sold which grossed over \$24,000 and netted nearly \$12,000 in profits thanks to donors and volunteers working together.

Willacy County Fair Raffle:

The Willacy County Fair Raffle generated \$10,000 for the Willacy County Fair. More than \$1,500 in donations was received to help offset the cost of the prizes

Extension Education in Willacy County

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